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# ON TAP

**Volume 12 Issue 1**

**JANUARY 2006**

## ***WINTER WATER CONSERVATION***

Trabuco Canyon Water District is offering some great winter water conservation tips.

**Avoid over-watering.** Plants suffer from over watering this time of the year, causing stress and disease. Most homes can leave their sprinkler systems OFF this time of year, especially in shady areas. If you think you need to water, check the moisture of the soil 3 to 6 inches below the surface. With our heavy clay soils, the surface may look dry, but the clay remains moist beneath the surface. If water is needed, see the suggested schedule below. According to the California Association of Nurserymen, more plants are lost due to over-watering than to any other cause.

**Avoid fertilizing.** Avoid fertilizing your lawn during the winter. Fertilizing can force a growth spurt when plants naturally go into a dormant phase. If a growth spurt happens before a chill, the cold can permanently damage plants. In addition, fertilizer applied during this time of year is more likely to get washed away by rain, contributing to pollution in the waterways.

**Cut back roses.** Rosarians practice a wide variety of pruning techniques. Search under "pruning roses" on the internet for the pruning method that will best serve your roses.

**Plant bare roots.** This is the bare root season for fruit trees and roses. Water to keep the plants moist, but not wet. Water deeply, not

frequently. Hand water the new plants directly in the early morning. Allow about an hour for the water to soak in before re-applying. Local nurseries have a wide variety of fruit trees and roses at this time of the year.

**Mulch.** Regardless of the season, a layer of mulch in garden beds can contribute significantly to water conservation. Mulching reduces evaporation, moderates soil temperatures, discourages weed growth and helps prevent soil compaction. And if that isn't enough, mulching can be a very attractive alternative to thirsty plants and ground covers. The best-looking mulches are bark, wood chips and pebbles.

### **WEEKLY WATER SCHEDULE JANUARY AND FEBRUARY**

Trees, shrubs,	
<u>Turf grass</u>	<u>groundcover</u>
2 days	1 day
2 cycles of	2 cycles of
2 minutes	3 minutes

Some irrigation controllers have a feature by which the watering time can be set by changing the percentage instead of specifically entering the days, cycles and minutes. If this is the case with your controller, a reduction of 30% should be programmed.

Water needs will remain low even if the temperature is warm, for two reasons. First, the days are shorter, so evaporation decreases. Second, plants are in a dormant phase in which they need less water.

### ***CONSERVATION ENCOURAGEMENT RATE PROGRAM***

As the demand for water increases with the growth in Southern California, wise use of water is essential. The Conservation Encouragement Rate Program (CERP) was approved by the Board of Directors following a noticed Public Hearing which was held in October of 2005. The CERP is designed to reward wise water users and may possibly result in a rate reduction, while excessive water users will experience an adjustment to their rate similar to that of neighboring water districts.

The District will be providing monthly conservation water saving tips for indoor and outdoor use prior to the CERP being put in place in January of 2007. For instance, did you know that covering a pool saves about 1,000 gallons of water a month? Or, that an average California family can save about 140 gallons a month by fixing leaky faucets and pipes? Running full loads in the washing machine and dishwasher saves about 800 gallons a month.

The District looks forward to working with its customers in the coming year to stretch our existing water supplies and to avoid purchasing additional capacity in the future. And, don't forget, savings water saves energy and money and it's easy to do!

### ***TOYS FOR TOTS***

A special thanks to customers who contributed to the Toys for Tots program. The District was pleased to sponsor the program on behalf of the Marine Corps Reserves.

Regular Board Meeting is held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the District office located at 3203 Dove Canyon Drive, Trabuco Canyon. The public is encouraged to attend.

### ***BOARD HIGHLIGHTS***

- ◇ December 21, 2005 – Elected a Board President and Vice President.
- ◇ Made Committee members and agency representative appointments.
- ◇ Adopted a Resolution approving the 2005 Urban Water Management Plan.
- ◇ Discussed Zone and Area Rates Adjustments.
- ◇ Approved a computer networking system.
- ◇ Directed staff to take actions to adjust the developer Capacity Charges.
- ◇ Approved a cellular site lease.

*ON TAP* is published and distributed by TCWD. We welcome your comments, suggestions and questions. Please call or write Sharon E. Smith, Editor

TCWD's *ON-TAP*

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### ***OFFICE HOURS***

The District office hours are from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.